

salute one flag. Two are contributing to this country, serving at the same time in the U.S. House of Representatives in this Congress and in the last Congress and the Congress before that, and one is at the top of journalism as it relates to Spanish language international television, and another is a prominent businessman in South Florida. I think this is a time that the House is rightfully recognizing these great Americans for what they were able to do.

Mr. Speaker, to Mr. DIAZ-BALART and to Mr. KELLER and to all of my colleagues here, it is a great honor to bring this before the House, because I believe everyone can understand the reason why we are here, and it is justified. But this could be one of many examples of families that have contributed to our country. I know they will continue to do so, and I know their children's children will continue to do so, and this moment in history will just be one beacon of light to show how appreciative we are for not only the Diaz-Balart family for their contributions but other families like them.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KELLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I would totally agree with my colleague, Mr. MEEK, that the Diaz-Balart family has made America a much better place for all of our children to grow up. I have been very honored to serve with both LINCOLN and MARIO DIAZ-BALART, and I know they both have a lot of pride in their grandfather.

I am very happy that Mr. MEEK introduced this resolution honoring Rafael Diaz-Balart. Mr. MEEK also obviously has a lot of pride in the bloodline he has with the famous Congresswoman Carrie Meek. I was reminded of her just this past weekend when I was down in Miami for the football game on Sunday and I parked on Carrie Meek Boulevard down there.

I explained to the parking lot attendant that I served with Carrie Meek and I am friends with her son, KENDRICK MEEK. He said, Yeah, man. That will be thirty bucks. It only gets you so far. But I have a lot of pride in knowing both of these families.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance my time.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I just would like to thank Mr. MILLER of the Education Committee, also the majority leader's office and the Speaker's office for allowing us to bring this resolution so that it can be timely for the dedication this weekend when the good people of Florida and this great country and the Supreme Court Justice will honor the memory of Rafael José Diaz-Balart at the naming of the hall of the law school.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 131.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1500

AMERICAN HEART MONTH

(Ms. FALLIN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FALLIN. Madam Speaker, as you know, February is American Heart Month. It is a time when we here in Congress and the people across America can reaffirm their commitment to fighting heart disease, the number one killer in Oklahoma and the entire United States.

Nearly 80 million American adults suffer from some form of heart-related illness. Every 35 seconds, an American dies from that illness. Heart disease kills more Americans than the number two, three and four leading causes of death combined.

Madam Speaker, heart disease is a big problem for women just as it is for men, if not more so. In 1984, more women than men died from heart disease. In Oklahoma, 19 women die every day of a heart-related illness.

Last Friday, millions of men and women participated in National Wear Red Day to honor the many women who have been touched by heart disease. This was a great gesture, reminding us of the importance of fighting the disease. And we can fight it by exercising, maintaining health, eating healthy and refraining from smoking.

Madam Speaker, I encourage all my colleagues and all Americans to remember the millions of people affected by heart disease this month and to Wear Red Day for heart disease. By raising awareness of this disease, we can improve the lives of millions of men and women in this country.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. SOLIS). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

THE MIDDLE EAST

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. McDERMOTT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Madam Speaker, the President and his administration would be wise to avoid making Iran the next Iraq. Despite that, the demonizing

of Iran has begun as the President tries to divert the attention of the American people away from the Iraq debacle. Instead of advocating diplomacy in the region as recommended by the Iraq Study Group and countless leaders in both political parties, the President is making veiled threats that are becoming increasingly worrisome. The boiling caldron of violence in the Middle East is growing hotter, and to many people, the policies and pronouncements of the President concerning Iran are seen as throwing gasoline on the fire.

As the situation worsens in Iraq, the President talks more and more about Iran, as if the attention of the American people and the world can so easily be diverted. That is not going to work this time. The focus of the American people, indeed the focus of the world, is on the U.S. occupation of Iraq and the disastrous war the President continues to wage and escalate. We know he is raising the stakes in Iraq. Many fear Iran is not behind. And we see an irony in that.

Leaders in the Middle East I met with recently in Jordan blame Paul Bremer, the President's first administrator in Iraq, believing Bremer, unwittingly or otherwise, handed Iraq to the regime in Iran. He did it with disastrous decisions.

First, he dismantled the Iraqi army. That left the border between Iraq and Iran unguarded and open to the infiltration of weapons and insurgents to foment violence in Iraq.

Bremer gave the Shi'a effective control by mandating they receive a majority of seats in reconstituting an Iraqi government.

These decisions opened the border and at the same time tightened relationships between Iranian Shi'a and Iraqi Shi'a. It set the stage for Iran's influence to grow stronger and stronger inside Iraq and unleashed a torrent of violence, pitting Iraqi against Iraqi with American soldiers caught in the cross fire. Is there any wonder that many Iraqis believe their nation is being handed over to Iran by the U.S.?

Now, many believe the President's saber rattling toward Iran has less to do with its efforts to develop a nuclear weapon and more to do with his failure to understand the region and contain Iran from the outset of the war. Thoughtful people in the United States and around the world fear the President is compounding the trouble, not confronting the problems in a troubled region. Where does all this saber rattling go? History shows us the way.

In less than one generation, we have done what we vowed never to do again: We have allowed a President to stampede the Nation into a hopeless war, not because we had to but because he wanted to. This President believed he could have victory by saying it was so. We have seen the tragic consequences of that.

There are so many parallels between the Iraq debacle and Vietnam; it is unbelievable. The President and many

people in America forgot the lessons of history when a blank check was given to a President in Iraq. There are still some lessons to learn.

The Vietnam War was going badly, so much so that an earlier President did not merely escalate the war, he expanded it into Laos and Cambodia, secret bombing that did not shorten the Vietnam War or offer a path to resolution.

My fear is that we will forget all the lessons of the Vietnam War. It is time to ask the question: Is Iran the next Laos or Cambodia?

With things going badly in Iraq, will the President continue to ignore the lessons of history and order the American military not merely to escalate but to expand the war beyond Iraq? I wish a question like this did not have to be asked, but we cannot watch Iraq, consider Vietnam, and not worry that a President who refuses to learn from history or admit mistakes is not doomed to repeating the same mistakes.

Military action is not the answer in Iraq, in Iran or Gaza, or any other flash point in the Middle East. We need to dispatch an army all right, an army of diplomats armed not with bullets but with ideas, with resolve and with a book of American history in every briefcase.

The way out of Iraq must begin here on Capitol Hill, because down the street at the White House, they are only talking about more ways in and, we fear, other places to go. This war must end now, and there should be a binding resolution to indicate that to the President and to the American people.

AMNESTY FOR U.S. BORDER PATROL AGENTS RAMOS AND COMPEAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Madam Speaker, 3 weeks ago, two U.S. Border Patrol agents entered Federal prison. Agents Ramos and Compean never should have been sent to prison.

These agents were convicted last spring for shooting a Mexican drug smuggler who brought 743 pounds of marijuana across our southern borders into Texas. Members of Congress and countless American citizens have repeatedly petitioned President Bush to pardon these agents. At the House Democratic Caucus last week, the President said, and I quote the President, "We want our Border Patrol agents guarding the borders from criminals and drug dealers and terrorists."

Agents Ramos and Compean were protecting the American people from an illegal drug dealer. Mr. President, we are calling on you today, as you pledged you would last month, to take a sober look at this case.

Many Members of Congress have warned that if these two border agents enter prison, their safety would be threatened by those who hate law enforcement officers. Madam Speaker, tragically this happened last Saturday evening to Agent Ramos who was beaten in prison by a group of Mexican nationals.

Mr. President, the safety of these men is in jeopardy and time is running out. You alone have the authority to correct this injustice by pardoning these two men. Mr. President, please do not delay your review of the facts of this case.

Madam Speaker, my colleagues and I will soon be sending a fifth letter to the President concerning these agents. We are asking the President to please expedite his consideration of a pardon for these two men and help these families realize that America is a country that believes in justice. Madam Speaker, I want to repeat that phrase very quickly: America is a country that believes in justice.

Mr. President, please help these two Border agents. They deserve our praise, not to be in prison. Please, Mr. President, help them out now.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair.

THE PRESIDENT'S BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Well, finally, I have some grounds for agreement with the President, at least rhetorically. He says he is committed to balancing the budget by 2012. Unfortunately, after that statement, our disagreements begin.

First and foremost, he forgets or neglects to tell the American people that he achieves this so-called balance by borrowing \$1.2 trillion of Social Security surplus, spending it and replacing it with IOUs.

Remember, just last year, the President was shocked, shocked, when he went to Parkersburg, West Virginia, that the Social Security trust fund consisted of nothing but IOUs.

Now, the Federal Government is pretty good for its debts unless you run up such a mountain of debt and you cut revenues so much with tax cuts for the wealthy that you can't afford to meet those obligations; you can't afford to cash in the bonds or the IOUs to Social Security. And I believe that is his long-term plan, to bankrupt Social Security, Medicare and other New Deal programs that this administration viscerally hates because they don't encourage people to stand on their own. They say it would be a more productive society if we just didn't have all those so-

cial support programs or guarantees of Social Security.

I think they give people an opportunity. They allow people to take chances during their life because they know, if they don't make it in that business or something else they are trying to do, at least they have got a foundation there for their later years. So we should not jeopardize Social Security; the President should not borrow and spend the entire Social Security surplus just before the baby boomers retire.

But even after he does that, the President's budget does not achieve balance. Far from it. The President's budget assumes there will be no cost for the war in Iraq or the war in Afghanistan after 2009. I guess he has a withdrawal plan he has not told us about.

What about the much vaunted war on terror? No money in the future budgets for that. He assumes all that goes away, you know, the incredible amounts of money we are spending there.

He further assumes that if we cut taxes more for the wealthy, that the government will get more revenues. Now, isn't that a beautiful world? If we could just eliminate taxes for the wealthy, I guess we would go back to having surpluses for the Federal Government under the bizarre economic theories followed by these neoconservatives who thus far have been proven to be pretty wrong on a host of things, starting with Iraq and on down to their bizarre theories that, as you reduce revenues, your revenues increase. They don't.

Plain and simple, the wealthiest among us have to start paying their fair share to support this country particularly in a time of crisis. Why shouldn't they sacrifice? Like the young men and women, many of whom are in the National Guard because they needed an income. Yes, they wanted to serve our country, but they also needed the income; many of whom are in the military, yes, because they want to serve our country but also because they hope to get those education benefits and some training to do better when they come out.

But the wealthiest, they are given a total buy. They have been given tax cuts, the first tax cuts in a time of war in the history of the United States of America. But the President doesn't think we should ask anything of the wealthy, and he pretends that if we extend their tax breaks forever, if we eliminate taxes on estates worth over \$5 million, then in fact the government will have more revenues. Unfortunately, it is not true. It will increase the deficit wildly beyond the numbers in his budget.

So he borrows all of the Social Security surplus, robs the trust funds, spends the money, replaces it with IOUs, cuts taxes for the rich people. How else does he pretend to get the balance? By cutting Medicare.